



Town of Westford Massachusetts

Town Manager's Newsletter

February 2019



**Jodi Ross,
Town
Manager**

jross@westfordma.gov
www.westfordma.gov/tm
978-692-5500

Important:

Please sign up to
receive updates on the
latest road construction
in town.

[Subscribe to
Notifications](#)



Green Burial Forum
Thursday, February 28
At J.V. Fletcher Library
See Page 4 details

Farmers Market Vendor
Applications due on
Monday, March 4

Nomination Papers Due
By Tuesday, March 19

Annual Town Meeting
Saturday, March 23,
10 am, Abbot School



Watch
Meetings Online
westford 
community access television
www.westfordcat.org

Dear Westford residents,

I am pleased to announce we will be holding an Open House to showcase the Roudenbush Community Center on March 9th at 2 pm. The Roudenbush Community Center Inc moved back into the facility when the building reopened on January 2nd. Our Parks, Grounds and Recreation Department moved into the building in the end of January. Town officials will be giving tours of the building from 2 pm until 3pm, and TRCCI is holding events for several hours. I hope you will join us for a tour of this beautifully renovated building.

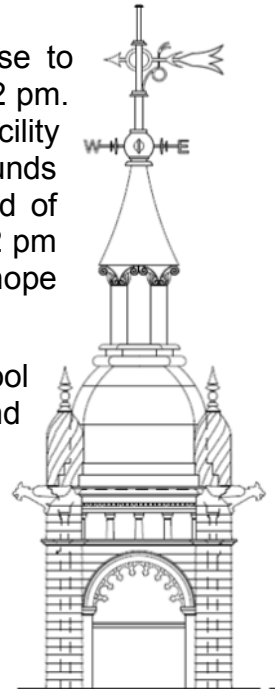
Our Annual Town Meeting will be held in the Abbot School gymnasium on March 23, 2019 at 10:00 am. The Selectmen and Finance Committee are reviewing articles at their upcoming meetings. Please watch your mail boxes in early March for the Finance Committee report and recommendations. Our annual town reports are being sent to the printer shortly and will be available for pick up at town meeting.

The final Town Manager Recommended Budget for FY20 has been voted and approved by the School Committee and the Finance Committee. The Board of Selectmen will consider the budget at their February 26th meeting. The School Committee has requested the Board of Selectmen, Finance Committee and Selectmen enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) if supplemental funds are needed to respond to rising school population due to the several new housing units under construction. The Selectmen will consider this MOU at their next meeting.

Nomination papers are still available in the Town Clerk's office for our May 7th Annual Town Election. If you are interested in running for a Westford public office, a list of open positions may be found here: [Candidate information here](#). Nomination papers are due back to the Town Clerk by Tuesday, March 19th at 5:00 pm.

The Cemetery Commissioners appointed an advisory subcommittee to study green burials, and make a recommendation which will come to the fall town meeting. There is a forum on Thursday February 28th at 7:00 pm at the JV Fletcher Library to learn about this practice. You may [register online](#) or call for information at 978-399-2304. For more information please see the library's notice on page 4 of this newsletter.

Our Board of Selectmen awarded a contract for an evaluation of the overall safety of our schools and certain town buildings and our emergency response procedures to Guidepost Solutions. We have information about this task force and their actions on our website at: [Town and School Safety Task Force](#). The Wellness and Behavior Health Gap Analysis RFP will be released shortly with proposals due April 1st.



(Continued on next page)

WWW.WESTFORDMA.GOV

The Selectmen formed a trash and recycling working group who are examining inconsistencies in our trash and recycling service we provide our residents. The group will be reporting a recommendation to the board at their February 26th meeting.

The Selectmen will be discussing next steps on 63 Main Street and the whole town center at their February 26th meeting.

You may have heard discussion about Stormwater Management, and the fact we have an article to create a Stormwater Enterprise fund on the warrant. The Selectmen will be discussing this again on February 26th, but if you would like to review information online, we have a link to do so: [Stormwater Management](#).

The town of Westford is bringing back the Farmer's Market! The market will run on Tuesdays starting July 9th through August 27th from 2:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Vendor applications are available here: www.westfordma.gov/WFM. Applications are due Monday, March 4th.

Our police department received a grant to assist with the installation of children's car seats. Please feel free to call 978-399-2345 to schedule an appointment if you would like this service.

You may have noticed that the conversion of the town's streetlights into more energy efficient LED lights has begun. As you will recall, this conversion was made possible through our 5th Green Communities Grant in the amount of \$250,000. Assistant Town Manager Eric Heideman has been overseeing this project and hopes to have all streetlights retrofitted with LED lights by March 1, 2019. If you have any issues with the new streetlights, please reach out to Eric at ehideman@westfordma.gov.



Old high wattage streetlights being recycled (left).

New efficient LED streetlights (right).

There are several openings on our local boards and committees, including:

12 North Main Task Force, Affordable Housing Committee, Agricultural Commission, Board of Water Commissioners, Communications Advisory Committee, Community Center/Mill Works/Recreation Department Task Force, Cultural Council, Economic Development Committee, Healthy Westford Committee, Historical Commission, Parkerville Schoolhouse Committee, Parks and Recreation Commission, Pedestrian Safety Committee, Permanent Town Building Committee, Westford Scholarship and Grant Committee, Zoning Board of Appeals, and others. I urge you to peruse our website for information about the work of these committees; and if you have interest, please complete a Citizen's Activity form at this link: [Citizen Activity Form](#) or stop by and fill out a form in the Town Manager's office.

Would you like more detailed information on Board of Selectmen meetings? Click the following links to access: [Board of Selectmen Documents](#) & [Board of Selectmen Meeting Videos](#).

Please mark your calendars for town meeting March 23rd at 10:00 am.

Sincerely,



Jodi Ross
Town Manager

February at the J.V. Fletcher Library

Our programs are generously funded by
the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library, Inc.



Sunday Hours: Resumed in January and run thru Sun., April 28. On Sundays the Library is open from 2 to 5 p.m.

Playful Engineers Travelling Makerspace: Wed., Feb. 20 from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. This is a hands-on STEM focused workshop where kids can design, build, test, and play with mechanical doodads, ping pong catapults, exploding popsicle stick snakes, and domino pyramids, just to name a few. Tickets (\$2.00) for children and adults are available in the Youth Services Department. This program is for kids in grades K to 4. Please note that space is limited – adults are encouraged to participate with their school age children.

Tween Playful Engineers Travelling Makerspace: Wed., Feb. 20 from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. Similar to the hands-on STEM focused workshop for kids, but aged up with Tween-level opportunities to design, build, test, and play. Tickets (\$2.00) for children and adults are available in the Youth Services Department. **This program is for kids in grades 5 to 8.** Please note that space is limited – adults may participate if invited by their tween.

Teen Bollywood Dance with Rachna Jangid: Thu., Feb. 21 from 11a.m. to 12 p.m. Jump in and learn this exciting style of dance – no experience necessary! Space is limited to 20 participants and is open to teens and tweens in grades 5 to 12. **Registration required for this free program. Teens and tweens can register ONLINE starting Mon. Feb. 11 at 9 a.m.**

Cookbook Club: Thu., Feb. 21 at 7 p.m. The Cookbook Club is dedicated to exploring cookbooks and sampling new recipes. We meet on the third Thursday of the month. Our February pick is *Ciao Italia* by Mary Ann Esposito. Copies are available for check out at the Main Desk. If you would like to bring a dish from the cookbook (not required to participate), please contact Sarah Regan in Information Services at 978-399-2309. No registration required.

Library Party for Gerald and Piggie: Fri., Feb. 22 at 1:30 p.m. You are officially invited to an awesome library party for our favorite twosome, Gerald and Piggie. There will be games (can you walk with a bird nest on your head?), crafts, photo ops, and just maybe a dramatic reading of one of our favorite Elephant and Piggie books. Tickets (\$2.00) for children and adults are available in person starting Mon., Feb. 4. This program is for all ages.

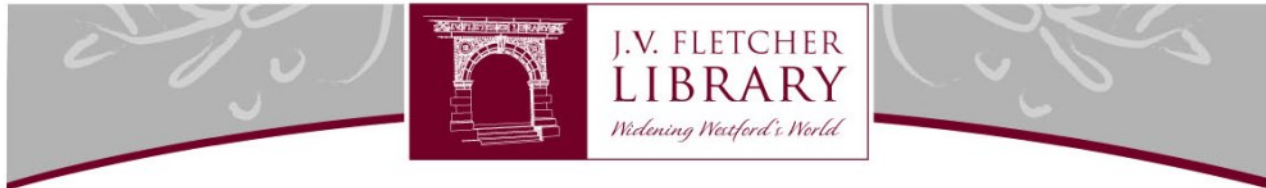
Green Burials: Thu., Feb 28 at 7 p.m. Come learn about “green” or “natural” burial, a practice being revived nationwide and currently under consideration in Westford’s cemeteries, where burial is directly in the earth with a simple casket or shroud, no vault lines the grave, embalming fluid is not used, and the body enriches the soil. There will be a short film and a presentation, followed by discussion. Ages 14 and up. **FREE!** Register online or call Information Services at 978-399-2304.

We are pleased to announce that **the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library, Inc.** has been selected to be a part of the Hannaford Helps Reusable Bag Program, which is specially designed to support local non-profits. For every reusable Community Bag purchased at the Hannaford located at **Drum Hill in Chelmsford** during the month of **February**, \$1 is donated to the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library, Inc.

J.V. Fletcher Library Participating in MBLC and Bruins PJ Drive: The J.V. Fletcher Library has once again teamed up with the Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners and the Boston Bruins to participate in their annual pajama drive to benefit DCF Kids and Cradles to Crayons. The PJ Drive’s goal is to collect 15,000 pairs of new pajamas for children and teens in need. The PJ Drive runs from Feb.1 through March 15, 2019. The library will be collecting new pairs of pajamas for babies, children and teens. The drop off bin is located next to the Main Desk.

Love Letters for the Library: Share your love for the library! Stop by and fill out a ready- made valentine or go to <https://lovemasslibraries.com/> to fill one out online. Tell us why you love the library! All Valentine’s will be forwarded to our state legislators to raise awareness about the value of libraries!

February at the J.V. Fletcher Library



Green Burials

Thursday, February 28th
at 7:00 PM in the Meeting Room



Come learn about “green” or “natural” burial, a practice being revived nationwide and currently under consideration in Westford’s cemeteries, where burial is directly in the earth with a simple casket or shroud, no vault lines the grave, embalming fluid is not used, and the body enriches the soil. There will be a short film and a presentation, followed by discussion. Ages 14 and up. FREE!

[Register online](#) or call Information Services at 978-399-2304.

Your membership in the Friends of the J.V. Fletcher Library, Inc. makes these programs possible.
Have you joined the Friends yet?

J.V. Fletcher Library | 50 Main Street | Westford MA 01886-2599 | 978-692-5555 | www.westfordlibrary.org

Parks and Recreation Update

Think Spring and Summer - Programs Now Registering!

The **Westford Parks & Recreation Spring-Summer Brochure** has arrived and registration is now open. We have a quality selection of cost-effective activities for all ages, including several new programs like *Sunday Night Restorative Yoga* with Revolution Community Yoga; *Rock Climbing* at the MetroRock Gym; and *Best Body Boot Camp* at Cassa Health and Fitness. The brochure includes information about Parks & Rec *Summer Weekly Programs as well, providing full-day, full-week, coverage during the summer months. Program registration has begun!

To register, visit Programs on westfordrec.com, or see our online [Spring-Summer Brochure](#).

*For additional program details and the online Summer Weekly Registration Forms visit summer weekly programs, westfordrec.com.



Westford Partnership for Children (WPC)

Westford Partnership for Children (WPC) is a Parks & Recreation sponsored After School Enrichment Program for K-8 that collaborates with Westford Public Schools. The WPC program begins at school dismissal and runs through 5:45 p.m., Monday through Friday. For participants, the WPC program provides a wide variety of after school activities in a safe and stimulating environment. For parents, the program offers flexible scheduling options and Special Programs coverage during professional development days, parent conferences, and February and April vacations.

WPC Session 3 is currently in process with an end date of March 1. Enroll at any point during the session.

WPC Session 4 starts on March 4 and runs through April 26. Session 4 will offer a range of activities such as *Building Toys*, *Infinity Tag*, *Music Rocks*, *Theater Arts* and *Tennis with Marcus Lewis*.

Registration forms can be found at 65 Main Street, 3rd floor, or visit [About WPC](#) on westfordrec.com.

The New Move Update

Westford Parks & Recreation moved and is now located at 65 Main Street on the 3rd floor of the newly renovated Roudenbush building. Staff members are excited about our new location and look forward to your visit!

For more information about any of our programming or facilities, come by 65 Main Street, 3rd floor, call us at 978-692-5532, or visit at westfordrec.com.



Site Directors and office staff enjoy the new space at 65 Main.

Cameron Senior Center

The Cameron Center helps with Benefit Programs and More...

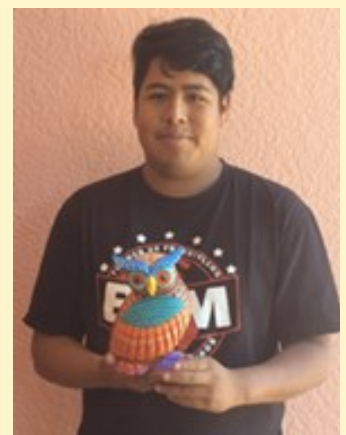
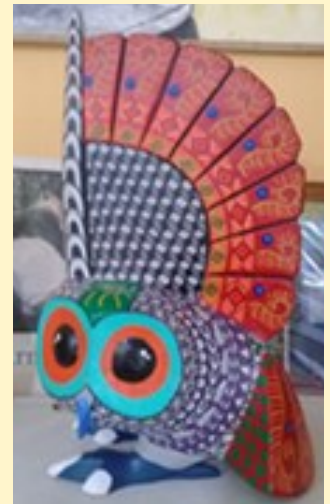
Senior and Veteran Tax Work Program

Tax Work applications are available at the Cameron Senior Center. Please apply if you are interested in participating in this program to work in a Town department in exchange for \$1,500.00 (minus federally mandated deductions) reduction in your FY 2020 real estate tax bill. You must submit a NEW application if you are interested in being placed this year, even if you have participated in the past. We will be using a lottery for first time applicants and then repeat applicants. Applicants must be 60+ years old, own and occupy the property for which Westford taxes are paid. **This year, those with a signed medical exemption can assign a family member or friend to do the work for them. Only one member of a household is eligible. Applications must be submitted to the Senior Center by May 1st.** The lottery will take place in May. If you have questions about the program or need a medical exemption form, please call Alison Christopher at 978-399-2325. The Veteran's Tax Work Program has the same criteria, but applicants can be 18+ years of age and can assign a proxy worker without medical documentation.

Incredible Program coming to the Cameron: Alebrijes from Oaxaca, Mexico

Award winning artist from the movie COCO

Armando Jiménez Aragon and his son Alejandro, two famous Zapotec Alebrije woodcarving artists from Oaxaca, Mexico, will be visiting the Cameron in Westford, MA on **March 5 from 4:00 to 6:00 P.M.** See how they craft their figures from copal wood similar to the ones in the recent Disney animated film Coco. The art was passed down to them from Armando's grandfather, one of the originators of the art form. They have traveled throughout the United States and Mexico giving presentations and workshops of their award-winning work. They will offer some of their work at the presentation for sale. Sign up at 978 692 5523.



Healthy Healing after Loss - 3/12, 6:00 PM

Join us on for Healing Conversations. Offering Friendship, Understanding and Hope with suggestions/techniques to help manage your grief.

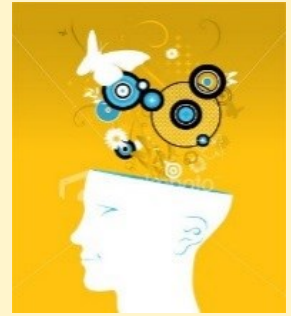
Healing Conversations is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope. It takes people out of the isolation society imposes on the bereaved and lets them express their grief naturally. This program is facilitated by Kathy Benson, LICSW at Nashoba Nursing Service & Hospice. Handouts and light refreshments available.

This is a free community health program open to the public.

Cameron Senior Center (Continued)

UNDERSTANDING MENTAL HEALTH – 3/28, 6:00 PM

Lowell General will be offering this free program to our center. Mental health issues are common in at least one out of every five people. In most cases, they are manageable and with the right kind of help, most people who experience these difficulties can live happy and successful lives. Join us to learn about the basics of mental health—signs & symptoms, myths vs. facts, and various forms of treatment. Please sign up at 978-692-5523 by 3/25.



CAMERON MOVIE NIGHT –3/21 at 4:30 PM

Join us for the movie *OCEAN'S 8*, an American heist comedy film starring Sandra Bullock. For \$3.00 you get a movie, popcorn, drink, light meal and dessert. Please call to sign up at 978-692-5523 three days prior to the movie for food shopping.

T.R.E.A.D. Program (Tax Relief for Elderly and Disabled)

Applications will be available at the Senior Center in May this year and will be **DUE ON AUGUST 1st**. Tax Relief for Elderly and Disabled is a donation funded program for property tax relief. Applicants must be 65 years or older OR have a state recognized disability and must own and occupy their home. The T.R.E.A.D. Committee will meet to determine awards in December 2019. If you have any questions about the program or need application assistance, call Alison Christopher, LICSW at 978-399-2325 or Annette Cerullo at 978-399-2326.

Good Neighbor Energy Fund

The Massachusetts Good Neighbor Energy Fund is available to any Massachusetts resident who, because of temporary financial difficulty, cannot meet a month's energy expense and is *not eligible for state or federal energy assistance*. This is a good program for people who don't qualify for LIHEAP but have a recent hardship situation. If you are interested in applying, call Salvation Army Lowell at 978-458-3396 or call Alison or Annette for assistance with a referral.

To view the complete Council On Aging Newsletter please visit our website:

www.westfordma.gov/coa

and click on
[Newsletters](#).



Westford Senior Center

Stormwater Management in Westford



Across the Commonwealth, the cost of stormwater management is rising for cities and towns due to new State and Federal requirements and aging drainage infrastructure (culverts, pipes, manholes, and storm drains) that will require more maintenance and replacement with every passing year. In Westford alone, the town maintains over \$150 Million of drainage infrastructure that protects personal property and allows safe travel.

Many communities have evaluated various funding alternatives that strive to be as fair and reliable as possible. Options include property taxes or a stormwater fee, which is common in many other regions of the U.S. A stormwater fee is typically assessed based on the amount of hard surface on a given property. Hard, impermeable surfaces are related to increased

and more polluted stormwater runoff as well as changes to the watershed that contribute to downstream problems such as stream channel erosion, poor water quality, and decreased infiltration into drinking water aquifers. A growing number of Massachusetts communities have recently adopted a stormwater fee, including our neighbors Chelmsford, Dracut, and Pepperell with average residential fees ranging from \$40 to \$95 per year. Non-residential rates vary greatly.

Westford has compared stormwater funding alternatives as part of the ongoing efforts of our Stormwater Management Master Plan and are now exploring the details of a possible stormwater tax or fee with input from town departments and decision-makers to present to residents at the 2019 Annual Town Meeting. To learn more, please visit us at www.westfordma.gov/stormwater where we will post additional information in the coming months.

Investing in drainage infrastructure improvements before there is a problem is the sensible solution. Healthy ponds and rivers and clean drinking water will require greater investments in the future. Our Stormwater Management Master Plan will help protect the health of Westford's water resources for current and future generations, and identifying an equitable, long-term funding source for stormwater is the key to success.

To be added to the stormwater information contact list to receive email notices about upcoming public meetings, write to stormwater@westfordma.gov.

Fire Department

Westford Fire is proud to announce that on February 1, 2019, Westford Firefighter/Paramedic Jesse Ryan graduated from the Massachusetts State Firefighting Academy. The Academy's fifty-day Career Recruit Firefighter Training Program provides rigorous professional training and provides our newest firefighters with the basic skills to perform their jobs effectively and safely. The Massachusetts Firefighting Academy (MFA), a division of the Department of Fire Services, offers this program tuition-free.



Community Gardens

Would you love to plant a flourishing garden, but your yard is full of shade, rocks, and hungry chipmunks? Then join the Westford Community Gardens for the 2019 growing season!

Apply at: www.westfordma.gov/communitygardens



Recycling Commission

NOTICE: February 18, 2019 (Presidents Day), is NOT a holiday for trash and recycling. Pickups will be made according to the regular BLUE weekly schedule that week.

Alerts from the Westford Recycling Commission

PLASTIC BAGS, empty or filled, are NOT acceptable in recycling bins and toters.

TANGLERS - cords, coat hangers, light strings, plastic 6-pack rings, garden hoses, wires, strings, ribbons, and chains - are prohibited from recycling bins and toters.

Empty. Clean. Dry.

The new way to recycle.

EMPTY - remove food or product residue.

CLEAN - rinse or wash empty containers.

DRY - let containers dry before placing in your recycling bin or toter.

NEW! Major recycling haulers in the state have agreed on a standard list of recyclables.

For the **Recyclopedia**:

Can I recycle this? visit <https://recyclesmartma.org/>. Bookmark this page!

Plastic Bag Reduction Program

Westford's new bylaw to reduce plastic bag usage goes into effect on January 1, 2019.

Everyone is encouraged to B.Y.O.B. (Bring Your Own Bag) when shopping. For more information, call the Westford Board of Health 978-692-5509. Please visit www.westfordma.gov/recycling for your recycling and trash questions.

**Westford thanks you for recycling,
reducing, repurposing, and reusing!**



Recycling Commission (Continued)

UPCYCLE IT!

You can recycle even more using *Sustainable Westford's* Upcycle It! program. It builds on Westford's curbside recycling program and allows you to recycle items you would normally throw away in your trash. Upcycle It! generates funds that benefit Westford schools. As of January 2019, Upcycle It! earned **\$14,997.90** for the schools and kept **9992 pounds** of trash out of the waste stream from **948,071 pieces** collected from residents.

You can find Upcycle It! collection containers at three convenient locations: J.V. Fletcher Library (basement near elevator), Starbucks at 174 Littleton Rd., and Whole Foods Westford (Upcycle It! blue barrel near store exit).

Visit www.sustainablewestford.org/upcycle-it for the latest updated information on what can and cannot be collected, plus Frequently Asked Questions.

Please note that writing instruments, coffee bags, and candy packaging are no longer accepted.

Upcycle It! accepts -

- Foil Drink Pouches and their straws (i.e. Capri Sun, Kool Aid, Honest Kids etc.).
- Energy or Granola Bars (ANY brand energy, granola, cereal, or protein bar).
- Chip Bags (ANY chip bag small or large).
- Oral Care Products (toothbrushes, plastic toothpaste tubes) We cannot accept electric toothbrush heads or battery powered toothbrushes. Battery powered toothbrushes can be recycled at Westford's Electronics Collection.
- Brita and Pur brand water filters and accessories – Brita and Pur brands ONLY.
- Baby and Toddler food pouches – ANY brand baby or toddler food pouches and their screw caps.
- Cereal Bags – ANY brand cereal bag including clear liners inside a cereal box.
- Beauty Item Packaging – ANY brand makeup/personal care packaging (mascara, lipstick/lip balm, eye shadow, deodorant, lotion tubes) **Please do not include items that can be curbside recycled such as most shampoo or conditioner containers.**

Please visit www.westfordma.gov/recycling for your recycling and trash questions.

**Westford thanks you for recycling,
reducing, repurposing, and reusing!**

